

DOCKET NO.: 10346ROUS01U

Remarks

The Applicants have rewritten claims 7, 17 and 27 in independent form to expedite their allowance. Claims 1, 11 and 21 have been amended for clarity.

Examiner stated that claims 7-8, 17-18, 27-28 and 31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 7, 17 and 27 have been rewritten in independent form, and claims 8, 18, 28 and 31 depend from claims 7, 17 and 27. Consequently, the Applicants submit that all of claims 7-8, 17-18, 27-28 and 31 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 1 and 21 have been amended to state that assigned egress addresses are added to packets where the packets enter the network and are removed from packets where they leave the network. Because addition and removal of the assigned egress address is a feature of claims 7 and 27 and the Examiner has deemed claims 7 and 27 to be allowable in independent form, the Applicants assert that amended claims 1 and 21, and their dependent claims 2-6, 9-10, 45-46 and 22-26, 29-30, 49-50 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim 11 has been amended to state that the network comprises plural interconnected routing devices such that packets are routed through plural successive routing devices according to egress addresses assigned where the packets enter the network. This is patentably distinct from the cited reference (Van Seters et al US 5,978,378) which discloses only the processing of packets within a single bridge or router and fails to teach or suggest the assignment of an egress address that is used for routing packets through plural successive routing devices. Consequently, amended claim 11 is not anticipated under 35 USC 102(e) by Van Seters et al. Because claims 12-16, 19-20 and 47-48 depend from claim 11, these claims are also patentable over Van Seters et al.

The Applicants acknowledge with thanks the allowance of claims 32-44.

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The Applicants assert that the application is now in condition for allowance in view of the above amendments and discussion. Consequently, the Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the application as amended.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account #14-1315 for any such fees; and Applicants hereby petition for any needed extension of time.

Yours very truly,

David MacDonald DELANEY et al

By


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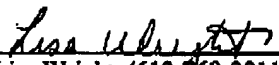
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